



yellow perch

Perca flavescens

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Osteichthyes
Family:	Perciformes
Order:	Percidae

Features

The yellow perch has a deep body flattened side to side. The sides are bright yellow to brassy green with seven dark, vertical bars. The back is olive green and the belly is light. The dorsal fin is completely separated into spiny and soft portions. It appears somewhat humpbacked. Its average size is one-fourth to one-half pound and six to 12 inches long. The state record in Iowa was just under two pounds.

Natural History

The yellow perch is essentially a lake fish and is most abundant in natural lakes. It is less common in rivers, with the exception of the Mississippi. It feeds in the morning and evening and rests on the bottom at night. It eats fish and insects. Young school near weedy areas, but larger fish usually prefer deeper water. It reaches maturity at one to two years and spawns in April and May. The female spawns 10,000 to 40,000 eggs depending on her size. The ribbon-like masses of sticky eggs are deposited over sand bars,

plants, brush, or other materials. Many are eaten by other fish, washed ashore, or stranded by low water. Eggs hatch in 12 to 21 days. The yellow perch has an average life span of seven to eight years.

Habitats

Mississippi River; natural lakes and prairie marshes; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs; interior rivers and streams

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.